Cheating of MMTC

765. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a newsitem published in the Hindustan Times dated 29th May, 1996, captioned 'MMTC cheated of gold worth Rs. 5 crores, by some unscrupulous jewellery exporters;

(b) if so, how these persons were able to take out 91 kg. of gold from bonded stores of Noida Export Processing Zone bounded area, and remained undetected by the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation or customs officials posted therefor over a period of 2 years; and

(c) whether Government have constituted any inquiry or set up Committee to investigate into the whole matter and suggest measures for safeguarding the interest of Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Issue of gold by MMTC to jewellery units on Noida EPZ is done under the control and supervision of Customs. It has been reported to MMTC that 96 kg. of gold has been unauthorisedly removed by the jewellery exporters from the jewellery units in Noida EPZ. Most of these cases have arisen after 31.3.95. The Customs authorities are proceeding against the defaulting exporters under the Customs Act and one of them was also arrested. MMTC has also filed criminal complaints with police for misuse of the duty free gold which was found missing.

(c) Government has constituted an Inter-Ministerial Group under the Chairmanship of Commissioner of Customs, Delhi to take coordinated action against exporters of gold jewellery who commit irregularities under the scheme for supply of gold by MMTC and refer them to the concerned agencies for expediatious action against the defaulters and to safeguard the interest of the Government. The first meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Group was held on 3.4.1996. To reduce incidence of misuse by the exporters, the Government has made a few changes in the Hand Book of Procedures. The period allowed for exports has been reduced from 120 days to 60 days on gold supplied on loan and 90 days on gold supplied on out-right purchase basis. The jewellery units in EPZ/EOUs are now also required to furnish Bank Gurantees on graded scales from 10% to 100% depending upon the export performance.

Production of Cars

766. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the total production of cars in the country, make-wise during the last three years;

(b) the number of cars exported during last three years, brand-wise and country-wise;

(c) whether in view of the congestion on the Indian roads Government would consider restricting the production of cars; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) Production of cars, makewise during the last 3 years has been follows:—

Hindustan Motors Ltd.	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
Ambassador	22,513	22,368	24,539
Contessa	3,380	3,809	3,642
Maruti Ltd.			
Cars			
800cc	1,00,292	1,17,056	1,51,44
lOOOcc	15,049	14,240	2,599
Omni Van	34,530	41,565	40,194
Esteem	—	11,196	40,960
Zen(YE-2)	—	14.926	33,561